TEN MILLION LIES

Some secrets don't live in houses—
— They live in minds —

BALDEEP GILL

“He married the woman he loved… but the truth about Sarah could destroy everything he thought was real.”

Inspired by Shutter Island, Memento, Gone Girl, and Fight Club

Chapter One – December 24

Life was good. Or at least, that's what I told myself.

My name is Morsey. I was thirty-four years old and working as a civil project

manager in a mid-sized construction firm. I had a cabin with glass walls, a company car, a polished desk, and a nameplate that made junior engineers

straighten their backs

when I passed.

Success looks clean from

the outside. Inside, it's dust

and concrete.

Most days I spent on construction sites—steel rods, scaffolding, half-poured slabs. Other days were meetings, contracts,

budgets, numbers shifting

like sand under signatures.

I lived alone in a two-

bedroom house on the

outskirts of the city. Not

too far from work. Not too close to anyone.

I wasn't married. Not yet. But I used to believe that

would change soon. I had plans. Everyone does.

On December 24th, 2023, I drove forty kilometers out of the city for a site

inspection. The winter air was sharp and dry. My colleague Harish sat beside me, scrolling through supplier lists and delivery confirmations.

He handled materials, transport, reinforcement, scaffolding—almost everything. The company trusted him. I trusted him. Trust is a dangerous thing.

When we reached the site, the usual chaos welcomed us—workers shouting, machines grinding, concrete mixers turning like tired hearts. I noticed

several workers without proper safety gear. Helmets missing. Belts unclipped. Carelessness.

The safety inspector had warned me last week. One accident can ruin everything.

That's when I saw her. She stood near the half-finished structure, holding a clipboard and a small inspection hammer. Municipal department

badge clipped to her coat. Long dark coat. Hard helmet.

When she removed it, curls fell over her shoulders. She

looked at the building first.

Then at me.

“Site manager?” she

asked calmly.

“Yes,” I replied.

Her name was Sarah. Her voice was steady. Professional. Controlled.

We walked together across the site—discussing measurements, compliance reports, structural approvals. She asked sharp questions. She noticed

small inconsistencies. I liked that. There was something precise about her. Something observant.

When we finished, she extended her hand.

“See you at the next inspection, Mr. Morsey.”

Her fingers were cold.

I didn't know then that some cold things never leave you.

That night, I found myself thinking about her. About

the way she looked at structures like she could see through them. Like she was searching for something hidden inside concrete. Like cracks. And

sometimes… cracks don't show on walls. They show in people.

Chapter Two – The Woman Who Measured Everything

I saw Sarah again

three weeks later.

Another site.

Another inspection.

Another cold

morning wrapped in dust and steel. She arrived alone. No small talk. No

unnecessary smiles.

Just work.

But this time, she stayed longer than required.

We stood on the third-floor slab of an unfinished commercial building. The city

stretched in grey

silence below us.

“You ever think

about what happens

to these buildings

after we leave?”

she asked.

“What do you mean?” I said. She tapped the concrete lightly with her inspection hammer.

“People move in. Open shops. Build lives. Trust the walls won’t fall.”

I smiled. “That’s the point of good engineering.”

She looked at me then. Not at the building.

“And what about people? Do you think they’re built as carefully as structures?”

It was an odd question. I laughed it off.

“People don’t come with load calculations.” She didn’t laugh.

After that, we began meeting more often. At first, it was coincidence. Then convenience. Then

intention. Coffee after inspections. Late-night calls about compliance reports that slowly

turned into

conversations about

childhoods,

ambitions,

disappointments.

She told me she was

from Jalandhar.

Small family.

Complicated past.

Two brothers.

Protective. Quiet men. She rarely spoke about her parents. Whenever I asked, she changed

the subject. I noticed it. But I ignored it. Because when you fall for someone, you don't

investigate them.

You edit them.

One night, almost a year after we met,

we sat in my living room. The lights were dim. Her head rested on my shoulder.

“You ever feel like something bad is going to happen?” she asked softly.

“No,” I said.

“I do.”

“Why?”

She paused.

“Because good things don’t last.”

I kissed her forehead. “We’ll make it last.”

She smiled, but it didn't reach her eyes.

We never had a dramatic proposal. No ring on one knee. No grand declaration. Just a

quiet agreement. Marriage. Small ceremony. Fifteen people. Most of them from her side.

I barely remembered their faces. I didn't question why there were no photos from

her childhood displayed. I didn't question why her brothers avoided long conversations.

I was in love. Or I believed I was.

On our wedding day, I remember

signing documents at the bank. There was a large transfer involved. Ten million rupees.

Investment. Trust account. Short-term holding. It was supposed to be temporary. Business

restructuring, she said. Her brother Joseph handled the details.

“Just sign,” she whispered gently. “It’s safe.”

I signed. Because love, like concrete, feels solid before it cracks.

That night, when everyone left, the house felt too quiet. She stood in front of the bedroom mirror,

removing her earrings—round silver hoops. For a second, I thought her reflection

looked… delayed. Like it moved half a second slower. I blinked. It was normal again.

“You okay?” she asked.

“Yeah.”

She smiled. “Good. Because we just built something permanent.”

I didn't know then… that some structures are built on emptiness. And emptiness doesn't

hold weight for long.

Chapter Three – The Man Outside the House

One year after our wedding, Sarah left her job. She didn't argue about it. She

didn't even discuss it.

"It's better this way," she said one

morning while pouring coffee.

“Your income is enough.”

I didn't question her. Love makes you accept silence as logic.

September 25. The air was colder than usual. The kind of morning where sound feels thinner.

I stepped outside at 9 a.m., briefcase in hand. And I saw him. A man standing across the

street. Still.

Watching the house.

When our eyes met,

he turned and

walked away—too quickly. Too deliberately. I stood there longer than necessary. Maybe

he was just a stranger. Maybe not.

That evening, I came home earlier than usual. The front door was slightly open. A

Honda hybrid was parked outside. Engine still warm.

I stepped inside. Two men were sitting at my dining table. Eating peanuts from the

glass bowl Sarah always kept there. They looked comfortable. Too comfortable.

Sarah stood near the kitchen entrance. She wasn't surprised to see me.

“Hey, Morsey,” she said casually. “We were just talking about you.”

She gestured toward them. “My brothers.”

Brothers. I tried to search my memory.

Wedding day.

Faces. Voices.

Nothing clear.

One of them stood up. Tall. Sharp eyes. Calm smile. Joseph, he said, extending his hand.

“I’m glad you take care of my sister.”

His handshake was firm. Too firm.

When his coat shifted slightly, I saw it. Metal. A handgun inside his inner pocket. Not

small. I knew weapons. I had seen enough security contractors on sites to recognize one. I

didn't react. I

smiled instead.

"Will you stay for

dinner?"

“No,” Joseph replied lightly. “Work in Chandigarh.” His

tone suggested

something else.

We sat for nearly

forty minutes. Small

talk. Business talk. But something in the room felt staged.

Joseph's phone rang. He answered quietly.

“Yes. I understand. I know what to do. I hope someone else understands the

meaning of our visit.” He hung up.

My pulse slowed instead of rising.

That scared me.

Because fear should feel loud. This felt… controlled.

After they left, I turned to Sarah.

“You didn’t tell me they were coming.”

“It was sudden.”

“And the gun?”

She didn’t hesitate.

“It’s for protection.

Their business involves risks.”

“What business?”

“Sales,” she said quickly. Earlier she had told me Joseph was a contractor. Now he was a

salesman. I noticed the contradiction. She noticed that I noticed.

For the first time since our wedding—her smile looked practiced.

Chapter Four – The Resume

The next morning, I didn't go to the office immediately. I sat in my car for ten minutes, engine off,

watching the

rearview mirror.

The house looked

normal. Too

normal.

Sarah waved from the doorway before going inside. Her smile was perfect.

Perfect things make me uncomfortable.

Instead of going to a project meeting, I

drove to her old office building—a mid-sized corporate block near the industrial zone. She

had worked there before our marriage. At least, that's what she told me.

The receptionist didn't recognize me. But the HR manager did. We had met once at a

company

networking event

long ago.

“Hey, Morsey,” he said, shaking my hand. “How’s life?”

“Smooth,” I replied. “No complaints.”

We spoke casually for a few minutes—about work, stress, old days. Then I

carefully changed the topic.

“Do you remember Sarah?” I asked.

He looked confused.

“Sarah?”

“My wife,” I clarified. “She used to work here.”

He blinked twice.

“Oh. Right. Yes. You mentioned her once before.”

Mentioned her once before. Not “she worked here.” Mentioned her. A small detail. But

small details build large doubts.

“I need a copy of her old resume,” I

said lightly. “She’s planning to return to work.”

He hesitated. “Let me check my email.”

Minutes passed.

Then he frowned.

“That’s strange.”

“What?”

“There’s a CV here. But it wasn’t sent from her official email. It came from

an unknown address.”

He opened it. There it was. Name: Sarah

K. Education: Chandigarh University. Previous Employer: Bafta Grand LLC.

Position: Assistant Project Coordinator. Everything looked professional. Clean.

Precise. But something felt… assembled.

“Can I have a copy?” I asked. He nodded and forwarded it to me.

Before I left, he looked at me carefully.

“Everything okay between you two?”

I forced a small laugh. “Of course.

She just forgot some details of her old job.”

He didn't smile back.

Back in my car, I opened the CV

again. Bafta Grand LLC. I searched the company online. It existed.

Construction

consultancy firm.

Head office:

Chandigarh.

I called the number listed on their website. A woman answered.

“Bafta Grand.”

“I’m calling to verify employment for Sarah K. She

worked as an assistant coordinator," I said, keeping my voice steady.

“Please hold.”

Music. Silence.

Three minutes. Then she returned.

“I’m sorry, sir. There has been no employee with that name in the last fifteen years.”

Fifteen years. I felt heat rising in my chest.

“Are you sure?” I asked.

“Yes, sir. Completely sure.”

The call ended. The silence inside my car became heavier than concrete. I checked the CV

again. There was an address in Chandigarh. House Number 623. Maybe she hadn't lied

about everything. Maybe she just used a different company name. Maybe. But

maybe is the

beginning of denial.

That evening, when

I came home, Sarah

was in the kitchen. She turned when I entered.

“You’re late,” she said gently.

“Traffic.”

She walked closer and adjusted my collar. “You look tired.”

I studied her face carefully. No stress. No fear. No cracks.

“How was your day?” she asked.

“Normal,” I almost asked her directly

about Bafta Grand. About the fake employment. About the unknown email. But I didn't.

Something inside me had shifted again. I wasn't sure what scared me more—her lies, or

how calm I felt discovering them.

That night, I couldn't sleep. The

ceiling fan rotated slowly above us. Sarah's breathing was steady. Too steady. At 2:17 a.m.,

I opened my eyes. For a moment, I thought I saw her standing near the mirror. Watching

me. But she was still beside me in bed. I sat up. The room was empty. Only

shadows. Only silence.

The next morning, I made a decision. I

would go to Chandigarh alone, without telling her the real reason. Because if she had

built this marriage on lies—I wanted to see how deep the foundation went.

Chapter Five – House Number 623

I told Sarah I had meetings in Chandigarh. She didn't question it. She never

questioned my work trips.

“Drive safely,” she said. Her hand

lingered on my arm a second longer than usual. Or maybe I imagined that.

The road to Chandigarh felt longer than it should have—four hours of highway,

four hours of replaying conversations in my head, four hours of asking myself the

same question: If she lied about her job… what else is false?

By evening, I found House Number 623. Old structure. Faded paint. Iron gate slightly rusted.

The kind of house that has seen too many seasons.

I rang the bell. An elderly woman opened the door. Cream cotton suit.

Thin frame. Eyes tired but sharp.

“Yes?” she asked.

“I’m from Improvement Trust,” I lied smoothly. “We’re verifying some old

employment records.”

She studied me carefully. Then

stepped aside.

“Come.”

The living room

smelled faintly of

medicine and old paper. Photographs hung on the wall. A young woman smiling in most of

them. Confident.

Bright. Alive.

“Your daughter?” I

asked.

She nodded slowly.

“Samira.”

The name felt heavy.

“I’m asking about someone who worked with her,” I said carefully.

“Sarah.”

The woman's expression changed. Not shock. Not anger. Something else. Recognition.

“Yes,” she said quietly. “Sarah worked with my daughter.”

My pulse slowed. So she did work in Chandigarh.

But the old woman continued.

“They were close at first. Like sisters.

But money changes people.”

I stayed silent. She spoke slowly, like

someone walking

through fragile

memory.

“A client paid ten million rupees. Full payment. Twenty-five percent advance, seventy-

five after completion.” Her hands trembled slightly.

“My daughter said the money never entered the company account.”

My chest felt cold.

“They checked. The payment had gone somewhere else.”

“Where?”

She shook her head.

“Different account.

We never knew

whose.”

“And Sarah?”

“She denied everything. They fought. Loudly.

Samira said she would report it.”

The room felt smaller. “And then?” I whispered.

She looked toward the photograph on the wall. “That night, my daughter was hit by a truck.”

Silence.

“Driver ran away,” she continued. “And Sarah?” I asked

carefully. “I never saw her again after the funeral.”

The woman looked directly at me. “But she wasn’t alone that day.”

My throat went dry.

“Who was with her?”

“A man. Joseph. Assistant from another firm.”

Joseph. The name echoed inside my head. I forced my voice steady. “They were close?”

She gave a faint,

bitter smile.

“Closer than they

should have been.

Case closed after some months.”

When I stepped outside, she added almost casually:

“Police questioned many people. Even a man who handled the payments.”

I froze. “A man?”

“Yes. He visited here once before.”

“When?”

She stared at me longer than necessary. “Years ago.”

My heart pounded. "What did he want?"

“He asked the same questions you asked.”

The air felt heavy.

“Did you tell him about Sarah?”

The woman frowned slightly. “Sarah?” She looked confused for just a second. Then nodded slowly.

“Yes… Sarah. But something in her pause disturbed me. As if she was adjusting the

memory while speaking. Or as if I was.”

When I stepped outside, the sky had darkened. I stood near my car, breathing slowly.

Ten million rupees. Fraud. Samira dead. Joseph involved. And Sarah… vanished.

But something else

was wrong.

Something I

couldn't explain.

When the old

woman mentioned

the man who

handled payments—

why did I feel like

she was looking

directly at me?

On the drive back,

my reflection in the

rearview mirror seemed unfamiliar. My eyes looked tired. Hollow. For a second, I thought I

saw someone sitting

in the back seat.

Curly hair.

Watching me.

I slammed the brakes. The road was empty. The back seat was

empty. Only

darkness.

That night, I reached home late. Sarah was waiting.

“You look pale,”

she said softly.

“Long drive.”

“How did you know?” I asked.

“Because you always look calmer after Chandigarh.”

I felt my pulse stop for half a second.

“What?”

“Nothing. I mean… work trips calm you.”

But she had said it clearly: After Chandigarh. How did she know I had been there before? I

had never told her.

Or had I?

I went to the

bedroom. Closed

the door. Stood in front of the mirror. For a moment—just me. Then slowly… a second figure

formed behind my shoulder. Not fully clear. Not fully visible. But smiling.

Chapter Six – Ritesh

I didn't sleep that night. Every time I closed my eyes, I

saw two things: the photograph of Samira, and Sarah smiling in the mirror.

By morning, exhaustion felt heavier than fear. I searched online for the old case: Fraud.

Chandigarh. Ten million rupees.

There were archived articles. Small

mentions. Nothing dramatic. But one name appeared repeatedly: Ritesh Singh – Cyber

Crime Division,

Punjab Police.

I found his public

Instagram account.

Professional photo.

Formal smile.

Observant eyes.

I typed a message:

“I know about a fraud case from five years ago. Ten million rupees.

Chandigarh. I have information."

I hesitated. Then sent it.

He replied the next day. Short. Direct.

“Call me.”

The call came in the afternoon. His voice was steady.

“This is Ritesh. What do you know?”

“I’d prefer to meet,” I said. Pause. “Why?”

“Because it’s not simple.”

Another pause.

Then he agreed.

Café. Two days later.

The café was neutral territory. Public. No risk.

Ritesh arrived on time. Tall. Clean-shaven. Civil clothes. His eyes

studied everything.

Including me.

“You messaged me about an old fraud case,” he said.

“Yes,” I replied.

“Go on.”

I decided to let him speak first.

“What happened in that case?” I asked.

He leaned back slightly. “Ten

million rupees transferred from a client to a secondary account. Account closed

within days. Money withdrawn in Bhopal."

My pulse slowed.

“Suspects?” I asked.

“Two employees. A woman named Sarah. And a man named Joseph.”

Hearing the names from someone else felt… grounding. So they were real.

“They disappeared,” he continued. “Before we could gather solid evidence.”

“And Samira?” I asked carefully.

“She was going to report

irregularities. She died in a hit-and-run the same week.”

“Accident?” I asked. He didn’t answer immediately.

“We never proved otherwise.”

Silence sat between us.

“I think I know where Sarah is,” I said finally.

His eyes sharpened.

“Where?”

“She’s my wife.”

He didn't react. Not shocked. Not impressed. Just… observing.

“How long have you been married?” he asked.

“Three years.”

“And you’re telling me this now?”

“I only recently found out.”

“Found out what?”

“That she lied about her job. Her past. Everything.”

He tapped his finger lightly on the table.

“Interesting.”

“What?” I asked.

“Because Sarah disappeared five years ago.”

The words didn't make sense.

"That's not possible," I said

quickly. “When exactly did you meet her?”

“December 2023.”

“I met her after that.”

He didn’t blink.

“You’re sure?”

“Yes.”

He studied me carefully.

“Tell me something, Mr. Morsey… did you ever check whose account that money went into?”

I felt something shift inside my chest. Like a memory trying to surface. I saw flashes: Bank

counter. Pen in hand. Glass partition. Sweat on my forehead. But no

bride beside me. No guests. Just me.

“No,” I said weakly.

He nodded slowly. “Bring me proof,” he said. “Marriage certificate. Wedding

photos. Anything official.”

“I can,” I said. But the confidence in

my voice sounded artificial.

When I left the café, my hands were shaking.

Sarah called as I stepped outside.

“Where are you?” she asked sweetly.

“At work.”

She laughed softly.

“You don’t sound

like you’re at

work." Her voice felt closer than it should have been. As if she knew exactly where I was.

As if she always knew.

That evening, I searched for our

marriage certificate. Drawer. File cabinet. Locker. Nothing. No official document. No

framed photos. No wedding album. Only one printed photograph on my phone: Us together.

I zoomed in. The edges around her shoulders looked slightly blurred. Like poor editing.

My breathing became uneven. I opened the gallery again. The photo was gone.

From the bedroom,

Sarah's voice

floated gently:

"Morsey?"

I froze.

“Yes?”

“Who were you talking to today?”

“No one.”

Silence. Then softly:

“Don’t lie to me.”

Chapter Seven – The Station

I decided to test her. If Sarah was planning something, she would react.

The next morning, while she was in the kitchen, I walked behind her casually.

“I have meetings in Chandigarh this weekend. Two days. Maybe three. You want to come?”

Her hand paused mid-air. Just for a second. Then resumed stirring tea.

“No,” she said lightly. “You go.”

Her voice was calm. Too calm.

I stepped into the living room and quietly messaged from Joseph's number—the one

Ritesh had managed to retrieve during earlier investigation records.

“Meet at Westwood Plaza. 5 PM. Urgent.”

I watched her reflection in the mirror. Her phone vibrated. She picked it up. Read. Deleted.

No visible panic. No visible fear. Just… calculation.

At 4:30 PM, she said she was going to a "kitty party."

She dressed carefully. Round silver earrings. The same ones from our wedding night.

“I’ll be late,” she said. She kissed my cheek. Her lips felt cold.

I followed her on my scooter, keeping distance. She didn't go toward Westwood Plaza.

She drove toward the railway station. Crowded. Loud. Chaotic. Perfect place to disappear.

I parked far away and followed on foot.

I called Ritesh. “It’s happening,” I whispered. “She’s at the station.”

Silence. Then his voice:

“Morsey… you’re alone.”

“What are you talking about?” I said.

“She’s right in front of me.”

“Morsey,” he said slowly, carefully,

“you came here alone. My officers have eyes on you.”

My heartbeat became loud in my ears.

“That’s not possible,” I said.

“She’s wearing a grey coat. Curly hair.”

“There is no one matching that description near you.”

I looked ahead. Sarah stopped walking. Turned. Smiled. People passed through her.

Through her. A man walked straight through her shoulder without noticing.

My breathing stopped.

“This isn’t real,” I whispered.

She stepped closer.

Only I could see

her.

“You’re tired,” she said gently.

Ritesh's voice continued in my ear:

“There’s no marriage certificate. No registered spouse. No neighbors have

ever seen a woman

in your house.”

I shook my head

violently.

“She’s right here!”

“She’s not.”

I looked at her again. Her face

seemed… thinner.

Less solid.

“You created her,”

she said softly. “To

carry what you did.”

“What did I do?” I asked. But I already

knew. Samira arguing. Her threatening to report. My anger. A road. Headlights. A

push. A scream.

Silence.

My knees gave out.

I collapsed onto the

station floor. People stared. But not at her. Only at me. Talking to empty air.

Sarah knelt beside me. Only I could see her.

“I will never leave you,” she whispered.

Because only I could see her, the truth landed like a heavy stone.

Police hands grabbed my shoulders. Voices blurred. Ritesh's

voice close to my

ear:

“It’s over.”

As they lifted me, I looked one last time. She was still there. Smiling. Unfading.

The Truth

Months later, I sit in a white room. A mirror in the

corner. I look at my reflection. For a moment, it's only me. Then slowly… another

face appears behind my shoulder. Curly hair. Round

earrings. A soft,

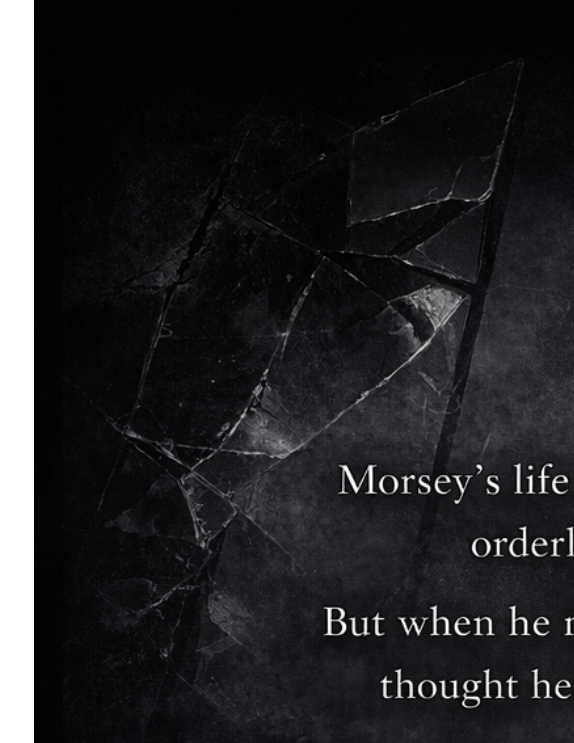
knowing smile.

I don’t turn

around. Because I

know. She is not behind me. She never was.

Secrets don't live in houses. They live in minds.



Morsey's life seemed ordinary—successful, orderly, and full of promise.

But when he meets Sarah, everything he thought he knew begins to unravel.

Secrets hidden in mirrors, shadows of the past, and a ten million rupee fraud force him to confront a truth he never expected: some lies aren't just told—**they are lived.**

In this dark psychological thriller, reality bends, guilt manifests, and the line between imagination and truth shatters. How far would you go if the person you love is also the reflection of your darkest deeds?

BALDEEP GILL

ISBN 5 00123 456789
9 781234 567897